

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 NOVEMBER 2019

Policy & Resources Committee

Tuesday 19 November 2019 at 3pm

Present: Councillors Ahlfeld, Clocherty, MacLeod, McCabe, McCormick, C McEleny, McVey, Moran, Rebecchi, Robertson and Wilson.

Chair: Councillor McCabe presided.

In attendance: Chief Executive, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director (Chief Officer), Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership, Head of Legal & Property Services, Ms C Craig-McDonald and Ms R McGhee (Legal & Property Services), Chief Financial Officer, Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications, Ms A Rainey (Organisational Development, Policy & Communications), Corporate Policy, Performance & Partnership Manager, Procurement, Regeneration & Building Services Manager and Service Manager – Communications, Tourism and Health & Safety.

The following paragraphs are submitted for information only, having been dealt with under the powers delegated to the Committee.

685 Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest 685

No apologies for absence were intimated.

Councillors Ahlfeld, Clocherty, MacLeod and Robertson declared interests in Agenda Item 11 (Governance of External Organisations – Annual Update).

At this juncture, Councillor Ahlfeld requested that Agenda Item 18 (Equal Pay Claims) be taken in public. The Head of Legal & Property Services explained that the report contained exempt information in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended by way of internal and external legal advice, together with implications and consequences, and he therefore advised that it should be considered following the exclusion of the public and press from the meeting and this was agreed.

686 2019/20 General Fund Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019 686

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) on the position of the General Fund Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2019 and (2) providing an update in respect of the position of the General Fund Reserves and Earmarked Reserves.

Decided:

- (1) that the latest position of the 2019/20 Revenue Budget and General Fund Reserves be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that the use of any Free Reserves will be considered as part of the 2020/23 budget process.

687 2019/23 Capital Programme 687

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the latest position of the 2019/23 Capital Programme.

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Decided: that the current position of the 2019/23 Capital Programme be noted.

688 Policy & Resources Committee 2019/20 Revenue & Capital Budget – Period 6 to 30 September 2019 688

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive, Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer on the position of the 2019/20 Revenue and Capital Budget as at Period 6 to 30 September 2019.

Decided:

- (1) that the 2019/20 Revenue Budget projected underspend of £1,488,000 as at Period 6 to 30 September 2019, be noted;
- (2) that the projected 2019/20 surplus of £48,600 for the Common Good Fund be noted; and
- (3) that the current projected Capital position be noted.

689 Welfare Reform Update 689

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an update on current developments in relation to Welfare Reform.

The Chief Financial Officer advised the Committee that HMRC had now advised the Council that it did not consent to the reuse of DWP data to optimise access to education benefits. He indicated that the Scottish Government and CoSLA were continuing to pursue the matter.

Decided:

- (1) that the various updates contained in the report be noted;
- (2) that the increase in take up in Education benefits approved as part of the 2019/20 budget be noted and that it be noted that funding is in place to make this increase;
- (3) that it be agreed that, due to the transfer of certain duties relating to Universal Credit claims to Citizens' Advice Scotland, funding previously provided to Future Skills from the Anti-Poverty Fund discontinue from 31 March 2020;
- (4) that the Council continue to pursue the reuse of DWP data to optimise access to education benefits and work with the Scottish Government and CoSLA in this regard and that the implications of pursuing judicial review be included in the next update report to the Committee; and
- (5) that the Committee's thanks be extended to all HSCP Advice Service Welfare Rights Officers who had provided representation at Personal Independence Payment Tribunal Hearings.

690 Insurance Fund Position as at 30 September 2019 690

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) on the position of the Council's Insurance Fund as at 30 September 2019 and (2) highlighting relevant issues.

Decided:

- (1) that the contents of the report and the Insurance Fund position as at 30 September 2019 be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that any adjustment to the annual contribution to the Fund following the recent Actuarial Review will be included in the February 2020 budget committee report.

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691 Treasury Management – Mid-Year Report 2019/20**691**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the operation of the treasury function and its activities for the first six months of 2019/20 as required under the terms of Treasury Management Practice 6 (“TMP6”) on “Reporting Requirements and Management Information Arrangements”.

Decided:

- (1) that the contents of the Mid-Year Report on Treasury Management for 2019/20 and the ongoing work to ensure the delivery of financial benefits for the Council be noted;
- (2) that approval be given to the Prudential Repayment policy for Loan Charges principal repayments as shown in Appendix 3 and that the £1,400,000 one-off and £400,000 recurring saving generated by the Loan Charges review be noted; and
- (3) that the Mid-Year Report be remitted to the Inverclyde Council for approval.

692 Contract Awards – 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019**692**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources advising the Committee of contracts awarded for the supply of goods or materials, provision of services and execution of works during the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019.

Decided: that the contracts awarded by the Council during the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019 be noted.

693 Statutory and Key Performance Indicators Annual Report 2018/19**693**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications appending the Statutory and Key Performance Indicators Annual Report 2018/19 which details the progress made in the last year towards the achievement of the Council’s Statutory Performance Indicator performance targets.

Decided:

- (1) that the Statutory and Key Performance information for financial year 2018/19 be noted; and
- (2) that it be noted that a separate report on the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators will be submitted to the Committee once the performance information has been published, setting out details of the Council’s performance relative to other Scottish local authorities.

694 Inverclyde Council Annual Complaint Handling Report 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019**694**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services advising the Committee of the annual performance in relation to all complaints received and handled by Inverclyde Council, Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership and both Arm’s Length Organisations (ALEOs), Inverclyde Leisure and Riverside Inverclyde, between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Decided: that the annual performance of Inverclyde Council’s complaint procedure be noted.

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695 Governance of External Organisations – Annual Update

695

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer on the annual update in respect of the governance of external organisations.

The following Members declared non-financial interests in this item:

Councillor Ahlfeld as a Board Member of Inverclyde Community Development Trust;

Councillor Clocherty as a Board Member of Greenock Arts Guild;

Councillor MacLeod as a non-executive Director of Parklea Branching Out; and

Councillor Robertson as a Board Member of Financial Fitness, Greenock Arts Guild and Inverclyde Community Development Trust.

Councillor Robertson also declared a financial interest as a result of a remuneration contract with Stepwell Consultancy Ltd.

All four Members formed the view that the nature of their interests and of the item of business did not preclude their continued presence in the Chamber or their participation in the decision-making process.

Decided:

(1) that the last 12 months' performance in respect of the governance of external organisations as shown in Appendix 1 to the report be noted and it also be noted that any outstanding issues will be addressed at the next cycle of Committees;

(2) that approval be given to the list of external organisations which will form part of the framework for the period October 2019 to September 2020 as shown in Appendix 3; and

(3) that reports providing an overview of and performance information on key organisations which do not currently have a Service Level Agreement in place be submitted to the Education and Communities Committee and any other relevant service committee.

696 Delivering Differently in Inverclyde - Update

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There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing an update on the Delivering Differently programme.

Decided:

(1) that the progress made to date on the Delivering Differently programme be noted;

(2) that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to conduct voluntary early release trawls where required for those projects in Appendix 2 but on the proviso that a report be submitted to the relevant Committee before any decisions are taken; and

(3) that the projects listed in Appendix 2 be added to the Delivering Differently programme.

697 Audit Scotland Reports on Midlothian, Perth and Kinross, Stirling and North Lanarkshire Councils

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There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications summarising the main points of Audit Scotland's 2019 Best Value Assurance Reports (BVARs) on Midlothian, Perth and Kinross, Stirling and North Lanarkshire Councils.

Decided:

(1) that it be agreed to note the content of Audit Scotland's BVARs on Midlothian, Perth and Kinross, Stirling and North Lanarkshire Councils and to take cognisance of the recommendations made in respect of those local authorities; and

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(2) that it be noted that Officers are considering implementing a number of proposed improvement actions, as outlined in section 9 of the report.

698 Procurement – Environmental Assessments and Local SMEs 698

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on (1) measures the Council can take that better include environmental impacts as a result of the Council's Procurement Policy, e.g. environmental weighting, and (2) measures that can result in more locally based SMEs and Inverclyde workers being successful in being awarded Council contracts.

Decided: that the work undertaken to include environmental impacts in terms of procurement, what can be done in future and the measures that are being taken to assist locally based SMEs and Inverclyde workers in being successful in being awarded Council contracts be noted.

699 Data Protection Policy 699

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services (1) providing an overview of the amended Data Protection Policy, a copy of which was appended to the report, and (2) seeking the Committee's approval of the amended Policy.

Decided: that approval be given to the amended Data Protection Policy.

700 Menopause Policy and Guidance 700

There was submitted a report by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications (1) on the development of a Menopause Policy and (2) seeking approval to implement the Policy.

Decided: that the Menopause Policy attached to the report at Appendix 1 be approved.

701 2020/23 Revenue Budget Update 701

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer (1) providing an update in respect of the 2020/23 Revenue Budget and (2) seeking the Committee's approval for a number of matters.

(Councillor Wilson left the meeting during consideration of this item of business).

Decided:

(1) that it be noted that the Scottish Government will announce a new date for the 2020/21 budget;

(2) that the savings options prepared by the Corporate Management Team included in Appendix 1 to the report be noted;

(3) that approval be given to the proposals contained in Appendix 2 of the report to further reduce the 2020/23 funding gap;

(4) that the overall estimated 2020/23 budget position as outlined in Appendix 3 be noted; and

(5) that approval be given to the separation of the Council Tax setting decision and the budget setting day, as has been the case in previous years, and that, subject to the approval of the Provost, the 2020/21 Revenue Budget be approved at a special meeting of the Inverclyde Council on 12 March 2020.

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It was agreed in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the ground that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act as are set opposite each item:-

Item	Paragraph(s)
Appendices 1 and 2 relative to Agenda Item 17 (2020/23 Revenue Budget Update)	1
Equal Pay Claims	1 and 12

Councillor Wilson returned to the meeting at this juncture.

702 Appendices 1 and 2 relative to Agenda Item 17 (2020/23 Revenue Budget Update) 702

There were submitted Appendices 1 and 2 relative to Agenda Item 17 (2020/23 Revenue Budget Update) providing (1) a summary of options together with potential employee impacts and (2) savings and adjustments proposals.

Decided: that the information contained in Appendices 1 and 2 be noted.

703 Equal Pay Claims 703

There was submitted a report by the Head of Legal & Property Services (1) addressing the request of the Committee at its meetings on 7 August 2018 and 5 February 2019 that consideration of a number of equal pay claims be continued to a future meeting of the Committee to allow further information in relation to a number of the claims to be provided and detailing the further information now provided and (2) advising of a request received from Councillor Ahlfeld.

Following a roll call vote, the Committee agreed to thank Councillor Ahlfeld for the information brought forward and that otherwise the recommendations in the report be noted, all as detailed in the appendix.